Gazette Telegraph 4-5-96

Boy charged in attack on gay

Associated Press

BATTLEMENT MESA — A 14-year-old boy has been charged with felony assault with a deadly weapon for attacking a homosexual classmate.

Robert Ramos Esparza was charged as an adult Wednesday. Esparza apologized for the attack, saying, "I really had no intention of doing what I did."

The victim, Jacob "Danny" Romero, 16, told police Esparza shouted crude names for homosexuals while attacking him with a chain.

Garfield County District Attorney Milt Blakey said he won't prosecute the case as a hate crime. "The only hate crime we have (in Colorado) is under the ethnic intimidation statute."

S OVER $499!

*See Page 2 For Details.